LOIS HUGHES.

*Leafwing (Doleschallia bisaltide australis) on Pseuderanthemum variabile*

# Butterfly & Other Invertebrates Club Inc. Newsletter

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## CLUB PLANNING AND ORGANIZING GROUP - 2004

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## PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION MEETINGS

A quarterly meeting is scheduled in order to plan club activities and the newsletter. See BOIC Programme.

## CONTACT ADDRESS AND MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

PO Box 2113, Runcorn 4113, Queensland
Membership fees are $12.00 for Individuals/Oganisations and $17.00 for family membership.

## AIMS OF ORGANIZATION

- To establish a network of people growing butterfly host plants;
- To hold information meetings about invertebrates;
- To organize excursions around the theme of invertebrates e.g. butterflies, fireflies, ants, dragonflies, beetles, freshwater habitats, and others;
- To promote the conservation of the invertebrate habitat;
- To promote the keeping of invertebrates as alternative pets;
- To promote research into invertebrates;
- To encourage the construction of invertebrate friendly habitats in urban areas.

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

If you want to submit an item for publication the following deadlines apply:
March issue – February 21st　　June issue – May 21st
September issue – August 21st　　December issue – November 21st

## COVER DRAWING

Leafwing (*Doleschallia bisaltide australis*) by Lois Hughes

## PRESIDENT’S POSTING

Hello all and welcome to this issue of the newsletter. I hope you enjoy it.

Collectively I believe our management and planning committee has been doing an excellent job of developing the club and my thanks goes to all involved. You will notice that we are coming up for an AGM, our 9th since incorporation in 1996. As with any community group the effort falls to a few, and it is important that we have some on-going renewal. You are most welcome to nominate to join the Planning group and help us develop our activities.

The 2005 Directory of Members has been distributed recently by email. Those without email will receive a printed copy, and anyone else wishing to receive a hardcopy is welcome to contact Daphne for this. We hope that this directory will encourage our members to make contact with each other. If you are not listed in this directory and would like to be, please also contact Daphne.

Frank and my forthcoming book “Create More Butterflies”, the culmination of some 15 years of work, will be presented to the Club at the AGM on the 9th April. We look forward to showing it to Club members at this time.

***Helen Schwencke***

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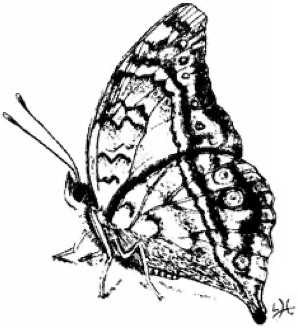
## Leafwing (*Doleschallia bisaltide australis*)

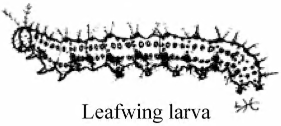
As the name implies, when this butterfly is at rest, it is the perfect image of a dead leaf. This enables it to be perfectly camouflaged in its natural rainforest environment.

The undersides of the wings are light brown in colour, with a line running down through the center, not unlike the mid-vein on a leaf. The upperside is orange-brown, with a black outer edge.

The larvae of this butterfly would have to be one of the most stunning I have seen. It is black with many branched spines, rising from orange-red and iridescent blue spots, which literally sparkle in the sunlight.

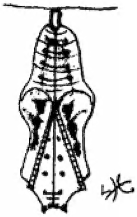


Leafwing (*Doleschallia bisaltide australis*)



Leafwing larva

The pupa is just as spectacular, not because of its colouration, as it is usually only light-grey or caramel-brown, but because of its geometrical shape. The pupa is always found hanging upside-down, usually not on its food plant. This would be because the larvae are very voracious, usually eating all of the food in the immediate area and so if the pupa were on its food plant, it would fall to the ground to most definitely die.



Leafwing pupa

The only native food plant I have found the larvae on, is Love Flower "*Pseuderanthemum variabile*." This is a low growing, herbaceous plant, with flowers varying in colour from pure white to dark purple. Some of the most beautiful are white with a red-speckled throat. The leaves of this plant are also variable in colour, being green, with the underside of some green, some purple-maroon.

Barung Landcare at Maleny usually has this plant in stock, but be warned, if you intend on raising these larvae, you will need a lot of plants. One good thing is that they seed very freely if given the right conditions.

Further information can be obtained by reading "Butterflies of Australia" by Common and Waterhouse, 1981 and "Butterflies of Australia, their Identification, Biology and Distribution" by Michael Braby, 2000. ***Bob Miller***

# PLANT PROFILE

## *Pseuderanthemum variabile* (Love Flower)

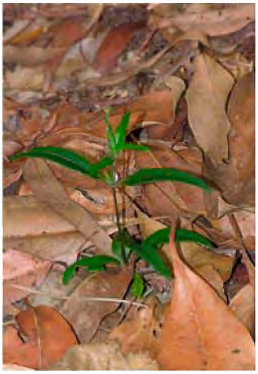
From the Greek pseudos meaning false, and *Eranthemum* a genus which it resembles. Robert Brown the British botanist who accompanied Mathew Flinders on his famous voyage, (the bicentenary of which we celebrated in 2002), originally named the plant *Eranthemum variabile*. This was later changed by Radlkofer to *Pseuderanthemum*. The specific name *variabile* means as is sounds variable. *P. variabile* is a member of the Acanthaceae family of plants.

*P. variabile* is an herbaceous understory plant found in many plant communities, including open forests and rain forests. It's distribution ranges from around Bateman's Bay in Southeast NSW to Cape York in Nth QLD, the NT and PNG.
The leaves are opposite, narrow to broad lanceolate and vary in size from 3cm to 20cm.

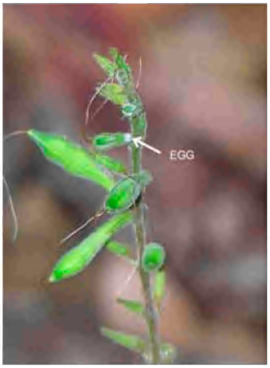
The flowers vary in colour from white, pink or pale blue and cluster on a terminal spike, with one or two opening each day.

The fruit is a narrow capsule, 10 to 14mm long. *P. variabile* ranges in height from around 10cm to 30cm.

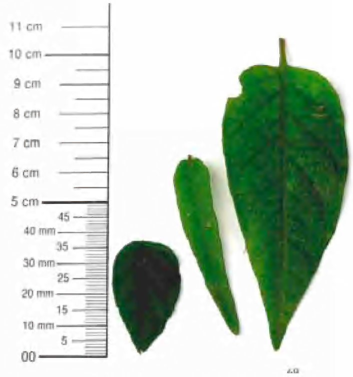
*P. variabile* is not only a host plant for our creature feature, the Leafwing, *Doleschallia bisaltide*, but also the Blue-banded Eggfly, *Hypolimnas alimena*, the Danaid Eggfly, *H. misippus*, the Varied Eggfly, *H. bolina*, and the Blue Argus *Junonia orithya.*



*Pseuderanthemum variabile*
Almost lost among the leaf litter



Seed head with Leafwing egg



Various sized and shaped leaves

Photos by Peter Hendry

***Peter Hendry***

# EXCURSION REPORTS

A delightful excursion was held to Springbrook on Saturday 19th February. Eight club members and friends started the afternoon at "Forest of Dreams" and a tour through a Glowworm "cave" developed by Errol Barns. Errol found the glowworms in a wall behind his premises and has enclosed it and turned it into a tourist and educational facility that allows people to see the glowworms during the day. Thanks goes to Errol and his courteous staff for making a tour available to club members.

From the glowworms we moved to the "Best of All Lookouts", via some roadside vines of the Scented Tylophera, *Tylophera paniculata*. We examined the plants for eggs and found those of a small pearly white moth that is active during the day. I'm raising some caterpillars in the hopes of getting the species identified.

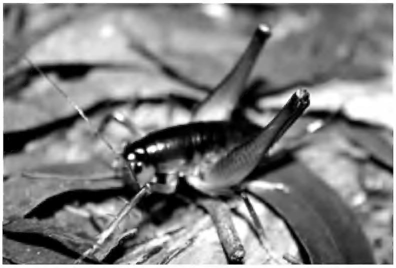
Still further along the way to the lookout we stopped at a stand of Tall Riceflower (*Pimelea ligustrina*). The flowers had all but disappeared, however, we examined many a seed head for evidence of the Yellow-spotted Blue, but to no avail. Numerous other insects had made the seed heads their home.

The Best of All Lookouts put on a special show, with not a cloud around to obscure the view of Mount Warning and all the landscape in between. Unfortunately, the cliff face immediately below the lookout was in deep shadow, so no butterflies were seen.

On the way down to the Purling Brook Falls Lookout we passed and investigated a magnificent Scrub Caper (*Capparis arborea*) that was still in flower. This bush had clearly put on a spectacular show this year, something that these plants do very infrequently. An unknown species of moth caterpillar was found eating the flower buds. As I didn't have a source of food, I was unable to take any of these to raise and get identified.

Near the entrance to Purling Brook Falls we found some very young Regent Skipper (*Euschemon rafflesia*) caterpillars. These were feeding by scraping the top of Veiny Wilkiea (*Wilkiea huegeliana*) leaves. They had stitched some leaves together for shelters, something that had not been evident two weeks earlier when the caterpillars were only a few millimetres long. Not many insects were on the wing at the time of the visit as it was getting later in the afternoon. A close look at the creek leading to the falls showed three specimens of a cream and bluish freshwater crayfish. Also along the creek we found a number of Magpie Moth (*Nyctemera amica*) larvae. These were more brightly marked than those that I've observed in Brisbane. No moths were flying at the time.

From Purling Brook Falls we moved on to Goomoolahra Falls and its lookout for our evening activities. After nightfall and a BBQ, we undertook a short walk. The Lomandras were showing clear signs of having been a delicious meal at some stage, either for the Splendid Ochre (*Trapezites symmomus*) or a montane relative. However, since there were no fresh chewings to be seen we couldn't find any larvae.


Probably Forest Cricket (possibly King Cricket). Ed. If anyone can identify it please let us know. Photo by Janet Willoughby

A number of interesting invertebrates were seen along the way. These included a female Forest Cricket (or it was possibly a King Cricket), various spiders, bush roaches, and other crickets. Our hopes of seeing other bioluminescent life was thwarted by a lack of rain for many weeks now, February having had the lowest rainfall for many years.

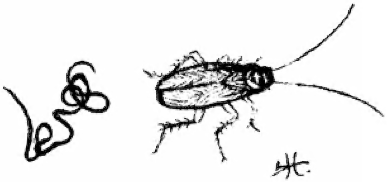
***Helen Schwencke***

## CREATURE NOTE

### Knots and Cockies

For me life is pretty amazing. I've come to expect the unexpected, as all around our home the bush pulsates with life, mostly unseen but often heard. For those of us who look beyond what is visible, life and death and birth are there to delight, intrigue or repulse. Some lifecycles I prefer to happen outside our home, for obvious reasons. The following encounters are certainly in that category.

A small brown cockroach, 12-15 cm long, similar to the familiar light tan German cockroach, landed on the bathroom window sill as I cleaned my teeth, one evening recently. I quickly reached over and squashed it with my fingers. I was both fascinated and horrified as this "thing" emerged from the cockie's dead body. The "thing" was brown and resembled a piece of wire as it writhed and twisted onto itself. It just seemed to keep coming! I estimated it would have been 5cm long but it was hard to tell. I couldn't believe it all fitted inside that small cockie's body. Yuk! I quickly located a sealed container and pushed them inside and as I turned around I saw another cockie on the wall, squashed it and two of these writhing "things" emerged!



All sorts of unsettling questions were tumbling through my mind and I had no answers. Each night for several weeks I had more of these encounters as these unfamiliar small brown cockies flew in, so I prayed for answers, as I was feeling very uneasy. What about the cockies I didn't see? Were they "birthing" these obvious parasites in places where we could be contaminated?

The answer came quickly as I showered the following evening. A dead cockroach washed into the water and immediately two parasites emerged and happily swam around in the water, whereas the others, not in water, died quickly. What a relief! I recognised them as wire worms which were sometimes deposited in the horses' drinking troughs as I filled them with creek water.

Further investigation revealed information from the Queensland Museum website (thanks Daphne and Martyn) and from the Museum's book "Wildlife of Greater Brisbane" and I quote from these sources.

They are Gordian worms (nematomorpha) of which there are two species. *Gordius* spp. which is smooth and golden and *Chordodes* spp. which is rough and mottled brown and black. They grow to a length of 25-30cm and their common names are Wireworms or Horsehair Worms. Their habitat is freshwater (or swimming pools). They are more common in summer and occur worldwide. Gordian worms parasitise insects when in the juvenile phase. The adults are free-living and do not feed but will live for many months seeking a mate.

Eggs are laid in water and ingested by the insect when it drinks, the developing parasite feeding on the soft tissues of its host, until it occupies almost all of its host's body! The worm has no mouth or gut and simply digests and absorbs nutrients through its skin. They are harmless to humans and animals. As the juvenile parasitic phase reaches maturity, the worm induces its host to seek water. How this occurs is unknown. The worm then breaks through the body wall of its host insect and swims free. The insect dies.

So it would seem I had my "knickers in a knot" over nothing. It's thirsty grasshoppers, praying mantis and little brown cockies etc. which should be afraid. I killed several German cockroaches and one large brown cockroach that flew in and none had these parasites in them. I can't recall seeing these small dark brown ones before. Can someone out there enlighten me?

The name Gordian apparently comes from a Greek legend. King Gordius tied a complicated knot which Alexander the Great cut with a sword. Hmmm! Very interesting! Knot!

***Lois Hughes***

## Catching the Bug

You have to be resilient to withstand the sympathetic glance or shake of the head when you mention to people that your hobby is watching small black insects come and go from a hole in a box, or in my case from a piece of plastic tubing. When you try to explain that your interest is keeping Australian stingless bees the inevitable question is ‘ Do you get much honey?’. I often feel like responding ‘You keep tropical fish don’t you? How many fillets do you get?’ but instead I lamely try to explain that I don’t keep them for honey production I just enjoy having and propagating them. Again the sympathetic glance returns. I could try to explain that they are excellent for pollinating some trees and vegetables, but that wouldn’t hold much water in my case because I don’t maintain a vegie patch and my small suburban block boasts only one sizable tree – a Macadamia nut. To make matters worse this native tree, renowned for being one of the most suitable for native bee pollination, is a complete dud. I get less than a handful of nuts off it each year despite having twenty hives within a few metres of it.

I guess I can claim my interest in native bees goes back to my young childhood in the 1950’s. Kids today would find it hard to believe that apart from watching Mum wrestle with the mangle on the newfangled washing machine the only electronic entertainment available was the radio, or as I knew it, the wireless. Kids, therefore, spent a lot more time outdoors and generally took a far greater interest in the natural world. Today’s kids would find it harder to believe that not every home had a telephone and mobile phones were a thing of fantasy in comic books – if you can remember that Dick Tracey wore a wristwatch model you must be nearly as old as me.

Anyhow, when Mum would make a trek to the nearest public telephone box to make a call I would tag along. Leaning against the fence surrounding the yard of an old farmhouse adjacent to the red phone box was a detached stump containing a nest of native stingless bees. Even as a kid I knew what they were. Sadly, today most people haven’t a clue and reach for the Mortein believing them to be flies or some other troublesome insect. I would sit quietly and watch them fly off and return with their little bundles of pollen or glistening resin until Mum thought she had had her fourpence worth of conversation and returned home.

A few years later the farmhouse was moved to make room for the first service station in this outer Brisbane suburb (as it was then). I was too shy as a kid to ask the developers for the hive that was left behind and within days vandals smashed it to pieces.

Many, many years later when visiting my daughter, who was then studying at the University of Queensland’s Gatton campus, I became intrigued by a large aging sign which stood outside a rural business at Hatton Vale on the Warrego highway. From memory this sign (which has since been refurbished) advertised something like: ‘Zabels – Earthmoving, Tanks, Septic Tanks and Native Bees’. Fascinated as much by the diversity of the enterprise as anything else I decided to call in one day and met the parents of Russell Zabel, one of the Gurus of Native Bee Keeping. They put me in contact with Russell and over the phone I ordered a hive of *Trigona carbonaria* bees. This, I might add was my first revelation. I had no idea there was more than one type to choose from. It was only later through the excellent reference material put out by Dr Anne Dollin of the Australian Native Bee Research Centre that I was to learn that Australia has several species of native social bees and hundreds of species of solitary or semi solitary bees.

My hive was delivered safe and sound a few days later by Aussie Post. Since then I’ve been hooked on native bees and have expanded my collection, not only in regard to the number of hives, but also in respect of the different species. I have also experimented with different hive designs and now use a round plastic tubing hive almost exclusively. I have also developed heaters to fit this design to enable me to keep more tropical species or to nurse a weak hive through the winter.

When I was invited to prepare this introductory article on the hobby of keeping native stingless bees for the BOIC Newsletter it was suggested that I should explain the pleasure this pastime brings. This really caused me to stop and think. I personally don’t keep them for the lovely tangy honey they produce (although others do) and they are certainly not warm, cuddly creatures devoted to or dependent upon human beings. They are completely independent and their attitude towards us could best be described as indifference, unless we are raiding their hive, in which case they can certainly make their presence felt. On an individual basis they are tiny creatures with attitude. If you doubt that put your finger near the entrance of a *Trigona carbonaria* hive and watch the way the guard bees will strut over to investigate. They fear nothing – no matter how big.

But it is their collective nature that holds the fascination for me. Social insects have developed over millions of years and while their activities are no doubt instinctive they give the impression of having collective intelligence. Who cannot marvel at this tiny creature’s ability to travel far and wide in search of nectar or pollen and yet be able to navigate back, unerringly, to a tree that looks very much like every other one in the bush? They can also communicate with each other, not through speech, but through the transfer of pheromones or maybe in other ways we don’t yet understand. Perhaps they employ some behaviour equivalent to the honeybees’ dance to direct their colleagues to a honey flow or to warn of approaching bad weather. We just don’t know all the answers yet and the possibility of discovering some small new piece of information is an attraction in itself for me. At night, through the glass observation panels on my hives I have, by torchlight, watched brood cells being constructed and provisioned by workers. I have seen the fastidious inspection of their work by the Queen before she lays a single egg and moves on leaving the cell to be immediately sealed by a worker. How many people have witnessed this process? Very few I would suggest. Readers familiar with honeybees will recognise that this behaviour is different from the reproductive technique employed by those foreign insects.

The above are intangible things, but there are more practical considerations as well. Stingless bees require very little care so no provision has to be made for them when you are going on holidays. Nor will they sting the neighbour's kids so you don't have to worry whether or not your public liability insurance is up to scratch in that regard. And if housed in an attractive artificial hive or a natural log these little creatures make an attractive garden feature and an interesting talking point while enjoying a quiet drink around the Barbeque.

Finally for me there is the attraction of the longevity of stingless bees. Not as individual bees, of course, but as a hive. Given minimal consideration and a hive made from durable materials the nest will outlive the dog, the cat, the budgie and you and me. The grandkids can argue over who will get grandad's native bee hive for their back garden when he finally shuffles off this mortal coil.

My hives have been designed with this longevity aspect in mind so if our editor is prepared to indulge me I might be allowed to provide some details on different hive designs and other issues about stingless bees in future issues of the newsletter.

***John Klumpp***

Ed. I'm counting on that John.

## FURTHER ADVENTURES WITH *JALMENUS EVAGORAS*

### So what happens when it rains? 2005-01-24

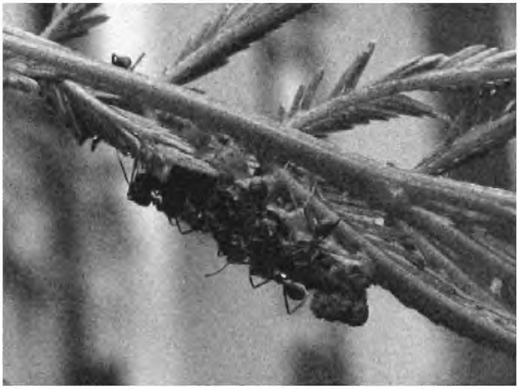
As part of my ongoing observations with *Jalmenus evagoras* there were a number of questions that arose. One major one, and the reasoning behind it, was this:-
If the ants which tend the caterpillars are mainly diurnal species which, like most ants, find their way to and from food sources by scent trails which are water soluble, and the caterpillars are rapidly picked off by predators if not ant tended – then what happens at night and especially what happens when it rains?

This is where having a colony of each using an *Acacia dealbata* tree in your backyard is very convenient!

Observations with a torch at night indicate that on WARM or mild nights the ants remain active, albeit reduced in number, and a small but steady trickle continues to tend the caterpillars and return to the nest during the night. If the weather is colder the ants seem to stop activity but due to the height of the sapling I was unable to see what was happening to the caterpillars which were all at the top. Presumably once the day breaks and the weather becomes warmer the ants can refind the scent trails back up to the caterpillars.

Armed with some secateurs and aided by recent rains I WAS able to answer what happens in the second scenario. Some foliage, complete with some larvae and attendant ants, was removed and persuaded to adopt a lower branch which was more easily observed.

In a very short time the caterpillars were feeding again, had created a patch of silk on the stem for pupation and clustering, and had a steady stream of ants travelling too and fro tending them. Over the next 3 days we had hail and 16 mm+ of rain. I didn't venture out in the hail but during both day and night rainstorms the tree trunks were washed over with rain and I assume all traces of the ant trail were dissolved or at least disguised. The caterpillars however were almost all resting on their silk patches (usually on the lowermost surface of the often near-vertical stems – the silk may have some water repellent quality?). Each caterpillar had a cluster of ants on their backs waiting out the rain with them! Both caterpillars and ants were virtually immobile often with droplets of water all over them. Certainly there were no ants travelling up or back down the tree trunk but if the caterpillars were touched the ants, would groggily swarm onto the fingers or move agitatedly up and down the stem. When the rain stopped and the weather appears to clear the ants begin to preen and the caterpillars begin to move. The ants then begin to file back down the branch to the trunk and seem to re-establish the scent lines. Ants from the nest are also out foraging along the more sheltered sections of the trail along the ground and pretty soon the two 'ends' join up again and the stream is renewed. I suspect that a similar small cluster of ants wait with the larvae on cold nights too but haven't verified this yet.



*Iridomyrmex* ***anceps*** group black ants waiting out the rain on the back of their *Jalmenus evagoras* larva. The lump on the back of the caterpillar is one of its droppings stuck there by the rain.
Photo by Martyn Robinson

***Martyn Robinson***

## Preface to the second edition

It is more than two years since this hostplant booklet first appeared. It has proven to be very popular and is the Club's most requested publication. We hope it has been useful to those who have purchased it.

I thank those who have passed on their personal observations and experimental results since the first edition. This information has both expanded the listing and made it more accurate. The plant list has increased by 53 to a total of 380 species.

In this revised edition I have given emphasis to certain groups of plants e.g. mistletoes, sennas, sedges, climbers etc. where these are poorly dealt with elsewhere. I have not included all hostplants of this region as detailed in Braby (2000 and 2004) and Common and Waterhouse (1972 and 1981) where erroneous or doubtful records appear. Most of these had gradually been eliminated but a few (e.g. some Manski 1960 records) still remain. Also it was thought inappropriate to include certain non-native hostplants such as Camphor Laurel, Chinese Elm etc. that are good hostplants but also are invasive weeds.

I have pedantically included all reliable records but where there is still some doubt have used qualifying terms such as "probably", "possibly" or "needs confirmation". Hopefully this will continue to give incentive to those who see this as a challenge and may result in further research. For those polyphagous butterflies such as Tailed Emperor, presumptive hostplants (usually in the same genus) have not always been included e.g. *Archidendron grandiflora* is listed but at least three other regional species (*A. hendersonii, A. lovelliae* and *A. muellerianum*), which may well prove to be good hostplants, have been excluded, as have the exotics Poinciana, Leopardwood and Crepe Myrtle.

A few plants e.g. *Dianella, Hypoestes, Tasmannia* have been dropped from this edition as subsequent information has shown them unlikely to be hostplants for the butterfly in question. One in particular, *Melastome affine,* was excluded because the leaf chewings which closely resembled epidermal damage on adjacent *Smilax australis* was found to be done by a moth larva and not the presumed Miskin's Jewel. A few butterflies (e.g. from the M. Manski 1960 list) have been removed from the previous listing where there appears to have been confusion e.g. the "white" female form of the Lemon Migrant being confused with the White or Common Migrant for the hostplants *Cassia brewsteri* and *C. fistula*. [Note. The white female form of the Yellow Migrant and the male Yellow Albatross in flight also resemble the White Migrant which potentially could lead to erroneous records.]

Where some botanical names are in contention, they have been listed in a way that butterfly breeders and collectors are familiar with. Some purists and botanists may not be comfortable with this e.g. three forms of *Cassia brewsteri* I have kept as separate "species" as they occur in different habitats, have different growth forms, leaves, flowers and are generally treated separately in the nursery trade. The gender of the mistletoe genus *Amyema,* previously listed as neuter, is now considered to be feminine, and the species endings will reflect this.

Those who wanted more moth hostplants will be disappointed. We have run out of time and space. Also it was considered too difficult to decide just what was to be included/excluded. This may still eventuate in a future edition or even a separate companion booklet – but unfortunately not in the near future unless others wish to attempt it.

Some readers have requested images of the plants, but for reasons of space and to keep costs down it was decided instead to reference illustrations in seven other publications. These are three popular published books, two books shortly to be published, another popular 6 volume set and one CD-ROM which includes, inter alia, hostplants for this region.

Finally, there is a whole new section, the reverse index, which lists under each butterfly, native plants, both local and cultivated, as well as some non-invasive exotics. This list, compiled for us by our Club Secretary, Peter Hendry, shows the known host plants for each butterfly, for this region. All are referenced back to the section in the first part of the book, in which they appear in detail.

***John Moss***

## ITEM OF INTEREST

## 10 years of Butterflies....makes for a big party

2005 marks the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Coffs Harbour Butterfly House at Bonville, just south of Coffs Harbour. On Saturday 5th March 2005 all were invited to join the Butterfly House to celebrate this milestone. A big birthday party was enjoyed by over 450 people, who were treated to "experiencing the butterflies and being educated" and who had the opportunity to join in with other celebratory activities including face painting, jumping castle and a special butterfly children's entertainer. A highlight of the party was the joining of the present and past owners and the Coffs Harbour Mayor to cut the big butterfly cake - which was enjoyed by all. The Butterfly House is open all year round from Tuesday to Sunday from 9am to 4pm and would love to share their experiences with you. They can be contacted on 02 66534766.

## Butterflies - Lifecycle and Survival Strategies

Have you seen an ant steal a recently laid butterfly egg? Have you observed butterflies laying eggs? Have you witnessed the metamorphic miracle of a variety of these amazing creatures? Have you appreciated the various shapes and colours in the pupae of these wonderful insects?

You can see this and more on the recently launched DVD - Butterflies Lifecycles and Survival Strategies filmed on site at the Coffs Harbour Butterfly House. This 25min educational film is a must for butterfly enthusiasts and all those who want to see this incredible story of change and beauty up close without missing a thing.

The DVD is available from the Coffs Harbour Butterfly House and through the club for – Members $12 and Non-members $15 plus $2 postage and handling (if purchasing from the Butterfly House please indicate that you are a B.O.I.C. member).

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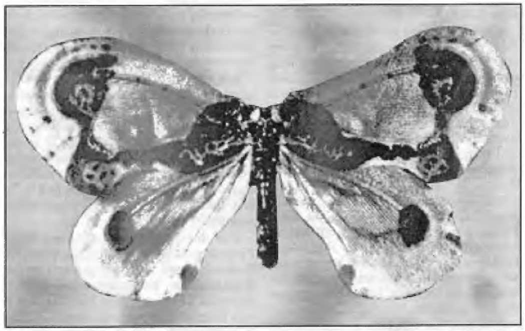
**Reprinted from Tamborine Mountain News, Tuesday January 11, 2005**

## Rare Lacewing positively identified



Dr Kevin Lambkin (ex-museum staff) travelled up from Brisbane to Tamborine Mt., to positively identify a specimen of the exceedingly rare lacewing *Megapsychops illidgei* found by Mrs. Susan Cantrell on the bathroom floor of her home in North Tamborine on the evening of 11 December. It had obviously been attracted to the light as have all the other specimens ever found, now totalling seven. The only other specimen seen on the Mountain in the past 30 years was at the Davidson property near the Showgrounds in late November 1995. The species was first discovered on Tamborine Mountain.

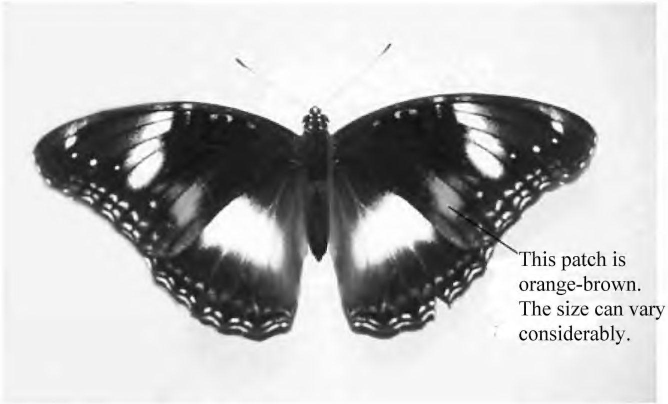
Because so little is known about its habits and habitat, each sighting arouses renewed interest in the Lacewing from natural history devotees. We are planning a field study in November this year (the beginning of breeding season), to be conducted by local interested naturalists. Anyone interested in participating please contact Susan Cantrell (Ph: 5545 2395).

## YOU ASKED

Q I have Common Crow (*Euploea core*) and Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) butterflies breeding in my garden from time to time. Recently I saw a large butterfly of similar size which had a large orange patch on the inside wings but with white spots on the outside wings. Have the Common Crow and Monarch butterflies been cross-breeding?

A This is highly unlikely. Even though these two butterflies are related and form part of the "milkweed butterfly" group they are more distantly related than for example the Cairns and Richmond Birdwing butterflies. Closely related species like these latter two have been successfully crossbred in the laboratory, however, this usually does not happen in the wild because each species has its own mating ritual which enables it to ensure that it mates only with its own species.
The butterfly you saw is most probably one of the many forms of the female Varied Eggfly (*Hypolimnas bolina*).

**_Frank Jordan_**



This patch is orange-brown. The size can vary considerably.

Photo supplied by Helen Schwencke

## LETTERS

Hello,

After reading the letter from June Wimberley that appeared in the December 2004 newsletter about her Common Eggfly butterfly (*Hypolimnas bolina nerina*), I was inspired to tell you about my Eggfly story, as I too had a memorable, resident male in the garden last year. "Eggie" as we called him, was a beautiful specimen, probably a bit smaller in size than most other Eggflys I have seen. Though small, he had a big spirit, and would chase anything that moved, including birds! I witnessed Eggie chasing Peewees and Noisy Miners on several occasions! He took up residence in an open area of the backyard, surrounded by trees, in January 2004. Below is a photo of him newly emerged, taken on 11/1/04.

Eggie liked to circle around his territory, making sure that other males weren't trespassing. If I held out my finger, particularly in the sun, he would readily land upon it. I guessed that he liked the view from my finger – he could look out from a high, sunny vantage point over his kingdom. When he landed on my finger, it always put a smile on my face. I came to love my little Eggie.

Once I witnessed a female Common Eggfly fluttering around the garden. It didn't take long for Eggie to notice her as well. Eggie left our garden to pursue the female. We saw them in the neighbour's yard, fluttering in tight circles in the air around each other. This behaviour was quite hypnotic to watch! The two butterflies seemed mesmerized, too. They hovered around for some time, then slowly moved out of view. I was sad that I might never see my friend again.

Charles McCubbin in 'Australian Butterflies' tells a similar story about the Common Eggfly, of how he witnessed two dueling males rotating and circling together until they were out of sight. One of the males had a distinctive torn hindwing – and was observed back in his territory later on in the day. McCubbin later captured the specimen, released it a quarter of a mile away, and found it back in its territory two hours later!

My Eggie eventually returned to his territory too, and stayed put for quite some time. Similarly to June Wimberley's Eggfly, my Eggie was in residence for a few months. His wings eventually became tattered and torn, and their gorgeous colour dulled, but that didn't stop him from being aggressive. He continued to chase other butterflies (and birds) in the state he was in (see over), on 6/3/04.

Sadly, all good things must come to an end, and this was eventually the case for my Eggie. One day in March, I found him in our (empty) rain gauge located in the centre of his kingdom. He was still alive, and must have slipped in, but he could no longer fly. He was just too weak. I gently placed him in the freezer to put him out of his misery, and also because I couldn't bare to think of him being eaten alive by ants. I buried him under a plant in his former territory. I can't help but think that he wanted me to find him in the rain gauge! I will miss Eggie, and hope that I will have another one this year. We have lots of Love Flower (*Pseuderanthemum variabile*) popping up in the garden, so that's a start!

Regards,
Alisha Steward

Photos supplied by A. Steward

Ed. Alisha had previously communicated the following to me.. "The *Hygrophila* Frank gave us at the last meeting is doing well in our "bog garden". We have lots of larvae in the garden at present! Green-banded Blues, Pencil Blues, Painted Ladies, Pale Triangles, Blue Triangles, Orchards, Meadow Argus, Wanderer.... Quite exciting as we only planted all their plants in the last 12 months!"…..
Now that's impressive isn't it?

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My baby fig tree is fruiting right now, and, of course, since this is Brisbane in summer, every fig I pick has been stung by fruit fly. Nevertheless, I keep picking them and breaking them open hoping that one might be OK. Up till this morning, every one has been consigned to the frog pond for the delectation of fish (maggots) and tadpoles (fruit). It's only a baby fig tree, so this doesn't mean great quantities of fruit. However, this morning I picked one, and broke it open to find inside, not fruit fly larvae, but lots of ants – the same species that farms the aphids on my citrus. After knocking the ants off, I ate the fig, and it was great – no maggots! Have I discovered a positive contribution from my ant farmers, or is this just a coincidence? I'll be watching closely in future, but, sadly there are only a couple of figs left on the tree, so a proper scientific study won't be possible till next year.

***Barbara Tealby***

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Dear Helen,
Reading the long list of butterflies you have raised on your "patch of dirt", makes me very envious.

We live on 3000+ square metres of dirt, which includes a bit of rain forest and borders the Mooloolah River gallery rainforest. We have not seen Pale Triangle, Clearwing, Tailed Emperor, Australian Painted Lady, Yellow Admiral, Lesser Wanderer, Swamp

Tiger, Jezebel Nymph, Glasswing, Caper Gull, Caper White, Yellow Albatross, Chalk White, let alone breed them. We have bred the Birdwing, although we didn't actually see the butterfly. Last year we had 6 caterpillars on our vines, this year I found 3 caterpillars and 5 eggs. All the eggs were fertile but were attacked and killed by the Red Mite.

Many of the Monarch butterflies we raised died. They were raised on milkweed and we thought that they absorbed too much poison from the mature leaves we were feeding. A controlled experiment demonstrated that the mature leaves do kill the caterpillars, six out of six died, whereas all the caterpillars raised on fresh young leaves thrived. All the Monarchs we have bred recently have had only two pairs of legs. I thought I had discovered something, but I was the last to know! Michael Braby's new butterfly book "The Complete Field Guide to Butterflies of Australia" page 31 reads:-
"Nymphalidae.........both sexes have only four normal functional legs, with fore legs substantially smaller in size, pressed against the thorax.......
Riodinidae...............males have only four normal functional legs.........
Lycaenidae.............males usually have only four normal functional legs......."
The new book on butterflies is marvellous.

Regards, **Hilton Selvey**

## WORLD WIDE WEB SITES TO WATCH

Mount Glorious Biological Centre has a new addition to their website promoting their school workshops. It is called '*Bugsed'* if you would like to have a look at it . They are still putting the final details in but most of it is available to view now. The address is: www.mountgloriousbutterflies.com

## YOUR CLUB'S MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

In February, 2002 your Club's organising committee decided to start encouraging members to network with each other in their local areas, and across their areas of interest. To this end we have now produced a membership directory. Only those members who have given us their permission have been included in the directory.

If you would like to be in a future issue of the directory please email Daphne at bowden@itconnect.net.au or phone: 07 3396 6334

## AVAILABLE FROM BOIC

**Grow More Butterflies (Revised)** –
A selection of articles published in previous Newsletters $5.50 plus $1.10 postage

**Butterfly Gardening** –
A series of articles published in previous Newsletters $2.20 plus $1.10 postage

**Butterfly Host Plants of SE Qld. and Nth. NSW** –
A comprehensive list of host plants for this region $5.50 plus $1.10 postage

**A Butterfly Habitat Regeneration Project** – Details of a project undertaken by a school in Rockhampton $3.00 plus $1.10 postage

**Swallowtail Butterflies of S.E. Qld. –** A companion booklet to the Poster $4.50 plus $1.10 postage

Poster -**Lifecycles of the Swallowtail Butterflies of South East Queensland**, compiled by the BOIC
Cost: Non-members $10 plus $5 postage Members $6 plus $5 postage

The **Butterfly Alphabet Poster** which shows all the letters of the alphabet and numerals 1-9 appearing in the wings of butterflies and moths. This poster can be viewed by visiting www.butterflyalphabet.com
Cost: Non-members $25 plus $5 postage Members $23 plus $5 postage

The **Domino Poster** - A guide for field, school or garden with 250 Australian butterfly illustrations in colour
Cost: Non-members $10 plus $1.10 postage Members $8 plus $1.10 postage

**Create More Butterflies** – by Frank Jordan & Helen Schwencke – Members $22.45 plus $4 postage & handling – Non-members $24.95 plus $4 postage and handling.

**CD-ROM** – Brisbane and Nearby Areas, Insects and Spiders by Peter Chew. Available from Peter Chew at 3 Byzance Close, Eight Mile Plains Q. 4113 and also from the B.O.I.C - $40 incl. postage

**CD-ROM** – "A Garden on the Wing" –Attracting Birds and Butterflies to your Garden -by Garry Sankowsky - $22 plus $2 postage and handling from B.O.I.C. Also available from Zodiac Publications, P.O. Box 210, Tolga, Qld. 4882 or www.rainforestmagic.com.

**DVD - Butterflies - Lifecycle and Survival Strategies** - produced by the Coffs Harbour Butterfly House available from the B.O.I.C. and also the Coffs Harbour Butterfly House – Members $12 – Non members $15 plus $2 postage and handling.

**These items can be obtained from BOIC, PO Box 2113, Runcorn, 4113.**

## ADS AND EXCHANGES

**Limited Edition Prints of the rare and endangered Laced Fritillary** delightfully depicted amongst Arrowhead Violets available from Lois Hughes Ph. 3206 6229.

**"60 Wattles of the Chinchilla and Murilla Shires"** available from the author, Grace Lithgow, PO. Box 67, Chinchilla, Qld. 4413 $20 including postage

## BACK ISSUES

**Back Issues of the Club Newsletter are available at a cost of $2 each plus postage (1-2 copies $1.10 - 3-6 copies $1.50).**

## OTHER GROUPS' ACTIVITIES

The IndigiScapes Weekend Expo or - "Indigi Day Out" is planned for Saturday May 14 and Sunday May 15 between 10am and 4pm. They are planning a huge weekend with activities including displays, stalls, guest speakers, music, mime artists and buskers, artists, bush foods, guided walks, media, bbq, etc. Venue: Redlands IndigiScapes Centre, Native Botanic Gardens, Runnymede Road, Capalaba. Ph. 3820 1107

## BUTTERFLY AND OTHER INVERTEBRATES CLUB PROGRAMME

### Visit to Bonni & John Reichelt's place and Nerang State Forest

When: Sunday, 20th March, 10am

Where: Meet at 158 Country Crs. Nerang. 6 cars can drive up and park near house, rest will have to park along street and walk up. Carpooling may be possible. (UBD 2003 Gold Coast Map 36 Ref G3)

What: In the morning, we will be insect-spotting and doing host plant ID on Bonni's 3.4 ha bush property, which backs on to the Nerang State Forest. After morning tea, we can continue the insect/plant search into the State Forest for as long as you like. Bonni will have coffee/tea/ cold drinks on patio. We can have lunch at the top of the ridge (about 45 min straight walk, but much longer if hunting for insects/plants) or when we get back to their property, depending on how long you wish to explore.

Bring: Lunch, a water bottle to carry, a hand lens, hat, sunscreen and insect repellant may also be useful. Comfortable walking shoes needed. The walk is NSF is grade 1-2, with some steep slope.

Contact: Daphne 07 3396 6334 or email bowden@itconnect.net.au

### Presentation of "Create More Butterflies" & Annual General Meeting -

When: Saturday, 9th April at 1.30pm for the AGM, with the walk to start 2pm till 4.30pm

Where: Mungara Visitor Centre, Eprapah Environment Scout Training Centre, Cnr. Colburn Ave and Cleveland/Redland Bay Road, Victoria Point (2003 Brisbane UBD, Map 226, Ref. 2D)
Contact: Helen 3844 6677 or email: hschwenc@dovenetq.net.au to RSVP or for more details

## Eprapah Creek and Clay Gully Walk
When: Saturday, 9th April, 2005 2.00pm – 4.30pm
Where: Meet at the Mungara Visitor Centre, Eprapah Environment Scout Training Centre, Cnr. Colburn Ave and Cleveland/Redland Bay Road, Victoria Point (2003 Brisbane UBD, Map 226, Ref. 2D)
What: See the new Butterfly Garden and Senses Trail as well as the Arboretum and Creek and Rainforest walks. If time permits we may move on to the nearby release site (Clay Gully) of the Swordgrass Brown butterfly
Bring: Afternoon tea (to share if you wish), insect repellant, hats, sunscreen
Contact: Helen 3844 6677, email: hschwenc@dovenetq.net.au

## Woodford Folk Festival site, Tree Planting Weekend on the Labour Day long weekend + Revegetation work on the last Sunday of each month
When: Saturday, 30th April & Sunday 1st May, and every last Sunday of each month, (starting 8am or earlier, overnight camping from Saturday is also permitted.)
What: The Club is involved with the Woodford Folk Festival regeneration / revegetation work to enhance the plantings for butterflies and other invertebrates. Come and learn more about butterfly host plants.
Where: Woodford Folk Festival site, Woodrow Rd, Woodford (2003 UBD Brisbane Map 33, Ref C13)
Volunteers wanted: We are looking for volunteers to help with site revegetation / regeneration particularly for butterfly habitats. Volunteering with this work on a monthly basis entitles participants to a free Festival ticket.
Bring: Gardening and watering equipment, morning tea and lunch, or things to share.
Contact: Helen 3844 6677, email: hschwenc@dovenetq.net.au

## Planning and Management Meeting
What: Our planning meetings are informative and interesting. As well as planning our activities we share lots of information. All members are welcome.
When: Wednesday, 4th May, 6.30 – 9.00pm
Where: to be advised upon RSVP
Contact: Daphne 07 3396 6334 or email bowden@itconnect.net.au to RSVP or for more details

## Indigiscapes Expo
What: Come and visit IndigiScapes and say hello to fellow club members staffing the stall. You're also welcome to join us with staffing the information booth.
When: Saturday / Sunday, 14 / 15th May, 10am to 4pm

Where: IndigiScapes Centre, Runnymede Road, Capalaba (2003 UBD Map 204 Ref L5)
Contact: Daphne 07 3396 6334 or email bowden@itconnect.net.au to RSVP or for more details

### Brookfield State Forest Excursion

What: We will be exploring the walking tracks and habitat at Pullen Creek and surroundings. This is a rainforest area and has Four-barred Swordtail and a wide variety of other host plants.
When: Saturday, 21st May, 1:30 – 4:30pm
Where: Mill Rd., Pullenvale (off Grandview Rd) (2003 UBD Map 175, Ref N11)
Bring: afternoon tea and drinks, hats, insect repellent
Contact: Helen 3844 6677, email: hschwenc@dovenetq.net.au to RSVP or for more details

### Marine Shells and Molluscs

What: A slide presentation on marine shells and molluscs by Robert Ellis, amateur malacologist ☺ (ie. Someone who studies and enjoys molluscs, he promised some nudibranch slides)
When: Thurs, 23rd June, 7pm – 9pm
Where: IndigiScapes Centre, Runnymede Road, Capalaba (2003 UBD Map 204 Ref L5)
Contact: Helen 3844 6677, email: hschwenc@dovenetq.net.au to RSVP or for more details

**If you plan to attend one of the above events, please contact the person indicated in case, for some unforeseen circumstance, the event has had to be postponed or cancelled.**

## DISCLAIMER

The Newsletter seeks to be as scientifically accurate as possible but the views, opinions and observations expressed are those of the authors. The Newsletter is a platform for people to express their views and observations. These are not necessarily those of the BOIC. If inaccuracies have inadvertently occurred and are brought to our attention we will seek to correct them in future editions. The Editor reserves the right to refuse to print any matter which is unsuitable, inappropriate or objectionable and to make nomenclature changes as appropriate.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Producing this newsletter is done with to the efforts of:
- Those members who have sent in letters and articles
- Lois Hughes who provides illustrations including the cover
- Daphne Bowden who works on layout, production and distribution
- John Moss for scientific referencing and proof reading
- Helen Schwencke who developed the overall design

We would like to thank all these people for their contribution

## ARE YOU A MEMBER

Please check your mailing label for the date your membership is due for renewal. If your membership is due, please renew as soon as possible.

**Membership fees are $12.00 for Individuals/Oganisations and $17.00 for family membership.**

Would you please advise bowden@itconnect.net.au if you get/change an email address.

**Butterfly and Other Invertebrates Club Inc.**
PO Box 2113
RUNCORN, Qld. 4113

**Next Meeting: Sunday, 20th March - Visit to Bonni & John Reichelt's place and Nerang State Forest – See programme for details**